



## A DOUBTFUL PROSPECT.

THE trials of Christmas are over,  
The parcels, the pudding, the pain,  
And we've fifty-odd weeks to recover  
Ere Yule-tide flows round us again.

We carp at each other in chorus,  
Our complexions are not very clear,  
And we shrink from the prospect before  
us—  
The youthful inviolate year.

We judge nineteen six as we found it,  
Good fortune in niggardly streaks,  
Blue sky with the cloud rising round it,  
And fewer caresses than tweaks.

We think of the schemes that we floated,  
The time and the trouble they cost;  
Their launching was almost unnoted,  
And half the flotilla was lost.

Through the year that we hope to inherit,  
In luck may the rest of you bask,

But a fair recognition of merit  
For myself is as much as I ask.

"The People's Year Book for 1907 is without doubt the most comprehensive encyclopædia of popular information . . . It has been brought thoroughly up-to-date."—*The People*.

MR. HOOPER, should this catch the eye of, let him beware. There is a rival in the field.

## THE TEMPTATIONS OF ANTONY.

It is an accepted thing to say of each new revival of SHAKESPEARE at His Majesty's (as of each new pantomime at Drury Lane) that the spectacle easily surpasses all former efforts of the Management. And of the present production of *Antony and Cleopatra* it is a true word. Never before has an astonished audience beheld such exquisite colour and design, nor antiquity so accurately restored. Never before has the chest-measurement of Roman soldiers expanded under cuirasses of so noble a beauty. It was a personal triumph for Messrs. HARKER and RYAN; for Mr. MACQUOID and the British Museum assistance; for Mr. Tree as Manager; for the actors (regarded as a mobile section of the scenery); for everyone except the author himself. He was constantly being sacrificed to the picture. The sense of sight is always dominant over the sense of hearing; and the intelligent ear only found its opportunity when the lust of the eye had become sated.

Thus, the memorable lines, spoken to Menas on the galley by *Sextus Pompeius* (a part in which Mr. L'ESTRANGE looked very handsome when he had his helmet on):

"Ah, this thou should'st have done,  
And not have spoke out! In me 'tis villainy;  
In thee 't had been good service"—

were almost lost in the distractions of the Bacchanalian scene. And it was noticeable that the greatest pageant of all—the return of the prodigal to his Alexandrine husks—was interpolated, and contained no spoken line of SHAKESPEARE's or anybody else's. I am not sure, for the purposes of this production, whether it would not have been just as well to cut SHAKESPEARE out altogether.

Mr. TREE, in his "Foreword," says: "To illustrate on the one hand the austere grandeur of Rome, and on the other the gorgeous splendour of the East, and so to capture for our audiences something of SHAKESPEARE's glowing imagination—this has been the aim of the present production." There is a note of modesty in that word "something." I should like to have seen the brave SHAKESPEARE seated in the stage-box beside Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL (who, I think, must have been wishing that Egypt was under the Colonial Office, so that he might arrange for it a Free Constitution like that of the Transvaal) and to have asked the author how much credit he took to his own "glowing imagination" for the scene, say, of the gaudy night on the galley. What a revelation of his own insight could he have watched the "austere grandeur of Rome" in the persons of her Triumvirate, as they unbent themselves and behaved just

like our own young barbarians at a bump-supper! I am sure that Mr. CHURCHILL, with his fine instinct for Imperial affairs, would have explained to him that these were the manners of the later Empire, and that Rome was still a Republic.

I also gather from the "Foreword" that "the tragedy of a world-passion redeemed by love—this is the story of *Antony and Cleopatra*." I doubt if any other words could with so admirable a terseness have misrepresented the facts. Actually, if we are speaking of the compass of the play itself, it is the tragedy of a sex-passion, relieved from time to time by the futile recurrence of a discarded political and military ambition. As for "love"—in the larger sense of a single-hearted devotion—we



Antony. Eros,  
Thy master dies thy scholar; to do thus  
[Falling on his sword]  
I learn'd of thee. How! Not dead? Not  
dead? . . .  
I have done my work ill.

Antony. Mr. TREE. Eros. Mr. BUCKLER.  
have the best commentary in *Cleopatra's*  
expressed fear that her attendant *Iras*,  
dying first, will anticipate her in the  
affections of Antony's ghost:

If she first meet the curled Antony,  
He'll make demand of her, and spend that  
kiss,  
Which is my heaven to have.

The play offers little chance for subtlety, except in the vacillations of *Antony*; and Mr. TREE (whose energies had spent themselves in a brilliant effort of stage management) lacked variety of voice and facial expression for their interpretation. *Cleopatra*, though she has many moods, is, in this play, a fairly straightforward character with only a very transparent veil of mystery—nothing, certainly, to justify the repeated apparition of the Sphinx on a drop-scene. It is true that *Cæsarion*, her boy by old

JULIUS, appears as a mute witness to a somewhat lurid past, but there is no hint of her historical overtures to young *Octavius*. The possibility of her chances in this quarter may just have crossed her mind where she calls him "My master and my lord." It is a pity that this meeting, with its excellent chances, had to be omitted, and that he is only introduced to *Cleopatra* when she is dead.

The colouring of this final scene in the "Monument" was of a marvellous dim beauty. I think it regrettable that *Antony* should have rolled off the bed when he expired, because the ladies had a lot of difficulty, even with the help of *Mardian* (who was not supposed to be there) in getting him back again. They had not really quite recovered from the exhausting process of hauling him up through the window. This had been done behind the curtain while the audience was being distracted by a little diversion in "Caesar's Camp" just over the footlights. Judging by the noise that went on behind I should say that the hoisting was done by a very primitive hand-crane.

In the part of *Cleopatra* Miss CONSTANCE COLLIER came very near to realising the sinuous figure of this "serpent of old Nile." In the scene where she buffets the messenger of evil tidings, as also in that other where she tries to escape capture in the Monument, she acted with remarkable intelligence and versatility. But she should never smile, for there her fascination finds its limit.

Most of the actors recited their lines without spontaneity. Some were indistinct, but Mr. BASIL GILL, as *Octavius*, was inclined to bark. (No attempt, by the way, was made to give consistency to the pronunciation of proper names. The *u* in *Fulvia* was sounded in the Italian manner, and so was the first *a* in *Cleopatra*; but *Octavia* and the rest were pronounced in the frankest British way.) Far the best speaker was Mr. LYN HARDING, in the part of *Enobarbus*, the most attractive character in the play. Candid in his criticism of all the world, including himself, the blunt and ready mother-wit of this bluff soldier delighted an audience not easily moved to enthusiasm. The gentlemen on each side of me (one had with him a son who had been getting up the play and was able to prompt his ill-instructed parent) were particularly pleased with Mr. HARDING's enunciation.

There were certain of his lines—

Purple the sails, and so perfumed that  
The winds were love-sick with them,

and again,

. . . . From the barge  
A strange invisible perfume hits the sense  
Of the adjacent wharfs—

which appealed very strongly to the audience in my neighbourhood, where



PETER PUNCH AND THE NEW YEAR.

(With acknowledgments to Mr. Barrie's "Peter Pan.")







## THE NEW PROGRESS.

"SO GOOD OF YOU TO COME SO FAR! DID YOU MOTOR OVER?"  
 "NO. WE FLEW!"

the heavy air reeked through a ten yards radius with a nauseating essence worn by a lady in a stall uncomfortably close to my own. Can nothing be done by the Management to check this insufferable offence? Would that I could have used the language employed by *Cleopatra's* bargees when this kind of thing was thrown back at them from the "adjacent wharfs." O. S.

## ZANCIGNALLING.

A WRITER in *The Daily Mail* ridicules the idea of telepathic communication between the ZANCIGS, and is convinced that the whole thing is done by a private code of signals. He says that when Mme. ZANCIG is blindfolded and cannot watch her husband's movements, then "M. ZANCIG communicates by means of the many strange sounds he uses, and not to be found in any known vocabulary." The *Mail* writer further prophesies that the ZANCIG boom will soon be over.

Mr. Punch imagines the ZANCIGS at breakfast. Professor Z. is reading *The Daily Mail*, and communicating, for the sake of practice, the results to Madame, who is blindfold. Professor Z., who has been making premonitory uncouth noises for some time, suddenly breaks out indignantly with:

*A cough—two sneezes—the noise of a pig squealing.*

Mme. Z. "Does it really? Do go on."

*The noise of an oyster opening.*

Mme. Z. "But how absurd!"

*A sneeze—the death-rattle of a cockroach.*

Mme. Z. "Oh, my dear! Then our fortunes are made."

*A sneeze—the death-rattle of a slightly larger cockroach.*

Mme. Z. "Thank you, dear. They're making so much noise upstairs, it's a little difficult for me. I quite misunderstood you."

*The noise of a larkspur laying an egg.*

Mme. Z. "Oh! But how terrible!

Surely that great paper will not desert us!"

*The noise of a dormouse sleeping.*

Mme. Z. "You must go slower, dear, I don't follow you."

*The noise of a dormouse hibernating.*

Mme. Z. "JULIUS! We are ruined! We are discovered!"

*The noise of a thermometer falling from 26° to 20°.*

"Yes. That is best, dear. We will go and see Mr. STEAD."

[Scene closes with Professor ZANCIG signalling for a hansom with the noise of a sycamore bursting into leaf.]

## Are we Downhearted?

IS the Epilogue to the Westminster Play the banners of the Suffragists bore the legend: "*Dejectæ sumus.*" JONES Minor of the Upper Remove writes to say that in his form they would have put "*Num dejectæ sumus,*" seeing that the answer "No!" is expected.

## A TRAP FOR COUNTRY MICE.

MR. PUNCH'S UNTRUSTWORTHY GUIDE TO LONDON.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## An Improved London.

LONDON, with all its charms, is, it is agreed, not perfect, and many a suggestion for its improvement has been made from time to time. We have even made some ourselves, such as electric heating in omnibuses, cigar-lighters on every lamp-post, &c., but without much avail to date. Hope, however, springs eternal in even our concrete bosom.

But this is a digression: who are we to speak of ourselves? It is the public men, the men of weight, who count in such matters. MR. ALGERSON ASHTON, for example, who wants to see more pillar boxes; MR. HALL CAINE, who would abolish barbers; MR. JOHN BURNS, who is in favour of a tramway in every street and penny steamers on the Serpentine and Round Pond; M. le Chevalier d'INDUSTRIE, who dislikes Scotland Yard and would utterly eliminate it; MR. CHARLES FROHMANN, who thinks there are too few hoardings; and Professor and MRS. ZANCIG, who cannot think how it is HIS MAJESTY has only one London residence in which to entertain.

These are interesting suggestions; but it is, of course, from your practical business man that the really valuable hints proceed. We therefore paid a morning call on MESSRS. GUSZARD AND BUNTER, whose wedding-cakes are famous wherever matrimony is held in repute. We found both gentlemen together, resting after their Christmas (or, as MR. BUNTER remarked, Yuletide) labours, and both, naturally, up to their eyes in gold.

"Improvements for London?" said MR. GUSZARD, completing the steps of the latest cake-walk. "Why, certainly, we have thought of many—haven't we, BUNTER?"

"Many," said MR. BUNTER.

"For example?" we asked tentatively, tenuousness and with tact.

"Well," said MR. GUSZARD, "there is our great wedding-cake scheme."

"Ah!" said MR. BUNTER with rapture.

"England, as you know," pursued MR. GUSZARD, "is suffering from celibacy."

"Bachelors," said MR. BUNTER.

"Yes, and old maids," said MR.

GUSZARD. "And we thought," he continued, "that if London were provided with a really noticeable wedding-cake—"

"Enormous," said MR. BUNTER.

"Gigantic," said MR. GUSZARD.

"Brobdingnagian," said MR. BUNTER with difficulty.

"A regular whopper," said MR. GUSZARD—"it might have the salutary and praiseworthy effect of drawing people's minds to marriage. Don't you think so?"

We agreed absolutely.



OUR UNTRUSTWORTHY ARTIST IN LONDON.

IMPROVEMENT OF THE ALBERT HALL.

(Suggestion by Messrs. Guszard and Bunter.)

"Not necessarily a mere model," said MR. GUSZARD. "It might be hollow and used for some practical purpose."

"A theatre," suggested MR. BUNTER.

"Or a garage," said MR. GUSZARD.

"Or a circus," said MR. BUNTER.

"Or a concert hall," said we.

"Ah!" said MR. GUSZARD with enthusiasm and brio, "there you have it. A concert hall. The Albert Hall! Our idea," he added, "is to take the Albert Hall, which is as much like a cake as any hall has a right to be, and place the Albert Memorial on the top of it. There you have the perfect wedding-cake—cake and ornament complete!"

MR. GUSZARD sank back in his chair in triumph.

"I venture to say," remarked MR.

BUNTER, "that no scheme for London improvement will go beyond that."

"None," said MR. GUSZARD. And in a burst of cordial agreement we took our leave. (There was nothing else to take.)

## ÆSOP ON TOUR.

THERE was once a Theatrical Representation of the Scene from *Ivanhoe* wherein the innocence of *Rebecca* is manifested by trial by Combat before the Grand Master of the Templars. In the centre

of the Stage, in piteous white Robes and with dishevelled Hair stood the Jewess, already chained (for greater effect) to the Stake at which, if her Champion were unsuccessful, she was to be burned alive. On the extreme Right the villain *De Bois Guilbert* sat upon a steed of sorts, wondering what on earth would happen when the three stout men-at-arms from the adjacent Mews who restrained the Animal with difficulty should let it go. And on the Left entered *Ivanhoe*, tossing upon a Charger which, nearly as alarmed as the Hero himself, was only dissuaded from jumping into the Orchestra by the combined efforts of four stalwart Esquires accustomed to shifting heavy scenery. And when the heraldic Preliminaries were over and the Trumpets sounded the Charge, not all the endeavours of the three stout men-at-arms to give the horse of *De Bois* a lead towards his Antagonist, nor the total weight of the four stalwart Esquires applied to the rearward quarters of the Champion's steed availed at all, but the two Combatants, with lances level in the rests, continued to wheel

round and round in divers parts of the Stage, sweeping everybody therefrom, excepting, of course, *Rebecca*, who was chained fast to the Stake. But after a space even she, though prepared for a certain amount of Martyrdom, grew tired of it, and tripping lightly away with the Stake adhering to the back of her Dress sought a more sheltered Situation amid the sympathetic Applause of the Audience.

Moral.—It is sometimes desirable to disregard Appearances.

"The bride's beautiful Indian trousseau was on view during the early part of the week, its dainty articles contrasting favourably with the rain and fog outside."—*Derbyshire Advertiser*.

MANY people would never have thought of that.



Laird. "WEE, MACALISTER, AND HAVE YOU FOUND ANY OF THOSE STRATED SHEEP YET?"

Macalister. "YESS. BUT I WAS FINDING THEM ALL AGAIN, SIR, WHATEVER. AND I DID FIND TWO BY ITSELF AND ONE TOGETHER, AND THREE AMONG ONE OF MACPHERSON'S!"

### POLLY.

SHE'S dainty and trim  
And straight and slim  
In her winter frock.  
Like a wind-touched field of grain  
Her shimmering rippling mane  
With many a wanton lock  
Spreads  
From her head's  
Rounded crown  
All the way down,  
Past the nape of her lily neck,  
With never a check,  
Till close to her waist it makes a stay,  
And breaks like a wave in a golden  
spray.

She knows no fear,  
And her eyes are clear,  
Her grey-blue eyes  
With their look of surprise.  
And she talks  
As she walks  
Just about dolls and Queens and Kings,  
And birds and dogs and delightful things,  
Things that are kind and must be true,  
That were done, she fancies, by me or you.  
And oh just hear how her laughter rings

With shout upon shout,  
When the old brown dog who has seen  
her pass  
Comes hobble-de-hobble across the grass,  
Or rolls about

In his funny ungainly spaniel style,  
And then gets up with a broad dog-smile,  
And stops and pants, for he's rather fat,  
Till he gets from her hand his prize, a pat.

She's wise,  
And she tries  
To help in the house and everywhere.  
If something's got to be done,  
Shaking her hair,  
Till it streams in the air,  
You should see her run  
With an overmastering zeal  
That you'd think she could hardly feel,  
For the tale of her years is only seven  
Since she came, a promise of joy, from  
Heaven.

Prattle,  
Rattle  
And tittle-tattle,  
Chatter,  
Patter,  
As mad as a hatter,

That is the way it goes;  
And, oh! you'd never suppose  
That little Miss Innocence giving you  
For a toy [thanks  
Or a joy,

With demureness written all over her face,  
And never a hint of pranks,  
Could shake off manners and put in their  
place  
Mischief, merriment, romps and tricks,  
Scampers, tumbles, and trips and kicks,  
And all in a moment's space.

But at last when the day  
Is done and all her play  
Has been played,  
With her eyes still shining bright  
Up she gets and, stepping light,  
Marches off—Good night, Good night!  
Who's afraid? R. C. L.

### Save me from my friends.

"THE many friends of Canon — will  
be glad to hear that, whilst he has some-  
what recovered from his long illness, he  
is still not allowed to take part in any  
work, and remains confined to his  
house."—*East Anglian Daily Times*.



### OUR HUMBLE PRODIGES.

(Suggested by a recent paragraph in "The Times" on Miss Vivien Chartres at Rome and Parma.)

"Are these your pretty tricks and fooleries?"  
Tennyson, "Merlin and Vivien."

A HAVAS Agency telegram from Dahomey says:—PIETR SCHITSCHIKOFF gave a concert last night at the Palace which proved in every way a phenomenal success. The KING, several of the Queens, the whole of the Royal Family and the first battalion of the Amazons attended the concert, and expressed their delight with exceptional cordiality. Several slaves were sacrificed during the course of the programme, and at the close the enthusiasm was quite unprecedented. Their Majesties repeatedly embraced the gifted young virtuoso, and presented him with a giraffe, a blow-pipe with poisoned darts, and a bag of superb grape-nuts from the Royal orchard. The KING promised PIETR a state umbrella, and asked whether he would like it green or pink. With remarkable presence of mind the child at once exclaimed "pink," at the same time glancing at Queen NGAMBALAKATSE, whose splendid albino complexion is one of the most attractive features of the Court. The attendant Amazons were deeply affected, and expressed their gratitude in an impromptu war-dance, culminating in a scene of extraordinary anthropophagic emotion.

Subsequently, on his return voyage round the Cape, PIETR SCHITSCHIKOFF called at Saint Helena and gave a recital at the Longwood Assembly Rooms. After he had finished playing BEETHOVEN'S "Emperor" Concerto, Lord NORTHCLIFFE, who had opportunely arrived on the previous day in his 100,000 h.-p. turbine yacht *Bonanza*, rose from his fauteuil, advanced to the platform and presented the gifted wonder-child with a cheque for £20,000. On the following morning PIETR, accompanied by the famous Peer, visited the spot where the remains of the Man of Destiny first rested, and deposited upon it a gold snuff-box with the simple inscription "To the Conqueror of Europe, humbly, from the Victor of WAGNER."

A Bulter's telegram from Lhasa says: Miss VERA RUNNYMEDE's recital at the Grand Lamasery last Friday was an altogether unprecedented success. The Dalai Lama, the Teshu Lama, and the entire phalanstery were present in their gorgeous robes, occupying the whole of the parquet, while the amphitheatre and gallery were filled by Buriats, Lariats, wealthy magnates from Sikkim, and other impressive personalities. The course of the programme was frequently interrupted by displays of fireworks, and both Lamas repeatedly prostrated themselves at the feet of the

gifted child-virtuoso, and presented her with a choice collection of oleographs, a diamond-hilted knobkerry and several kegs of Tibetan oysters. The Teshu Lama, a man of extraordinarily noble appearance, promised VERA a full-sized Yak, and asked her whether she would like a blonde or a brunette. With marvellous tact the child promptly replied "brunette," at the same time archly glancing at the Teshu Lama, whose luxuriant raven beard, measuring 4 feet 2 inches from start to finish, is one of the most influential assets of the Forbidden City.

On the following day VERA RUNNYMEDE made an interesting pilgrimage in company with Dr. SVEN HEDIN, who is, needless to say, one of her greatest admirers, to the tomb of GEORGE ALEXANDER THE GREAT, who, it is not generally known, perished in the attempt to force his way into Lhasa, his remains being interred in a cenotaph just outside the city walls. The scene was extraordinarily touching, several Yaks being removed in a state of partial hysterics when VERA laid on the immortal warrior's tomb a sheaf of press notices and a broken E string with the poignant inscription: "To the Samson of the East, humbly, from the Infant DALILA."

Later: The Dalai Lama has just conferred on VERA RUNNYMEDE the honorific title of *Pratibimba*.

A wireless telegram from Tokio says: MELCHISEDEK P. WANAMAKER, the wonderful American boy-flautist, gave a concert on Tuesday at Tokio. The EMPEROR and EMPRESS, the Heir Apparent, Marquis ITO, Baron SUYEMATSU, and General OKU were present, and expressed the most unbounded satisfaction with the performance, General OKU having subsequently to be removed to a rest-cure owing to the violence of his emotions. Their Majesties repeatedly remarked "Hara-kiri" (i.e., "encore"), and presented the young performer with an accordion-pleated kimono and a large decanter of Tatcho. On the following morning MELCHISEDEK, though far from well, went with Baron SUYEMATSU to visit the tomb of HOKUSAI, and laid upon it a silver piccolo with the touching inscription, "To a great man, humbly, from the only MELCHISEDEK."

THE 4'9 inch slush of a cabless London caused the dissipation of a number of cherished illusions last Wednesday and Thursday. Among others:

1. That the London Borough Councils can show intelligence at a pinch.
2. That the number of unemployed who are pining for work is inexhaustible.
3. That the London cabby is a sportsman who deserves to be encouraged in hard times.

### THE RECKONING.

Now the Festive Season's ended,  
Comes the sequel parents dread;  
Pale and visibly distended  
Bilious TOMMY lies in bed,  
Face to face with Retribution  
And an outraged constitution.

What a change since, pink and perky,  
TOMMY swiftly put away  
Three enormous goes of Turkey  
At the feast on Christmas Day,  
Getting by judicious bluffing  
Double quantities of stuffing.

As to pudding, who could reckon  
TOMMY's load in terms of size?  
Who attempt to keep a check on  
TOMMY's numberless mince pies?  
Hopeless task! His present pallor  
Proves his prodigies of valour.

Then I found him, notwithstanding  
Such colossal feats as these,  
After dinner on the landing  
Secretly devouring cheese,  
Flanked by ginger-beer-and-coffee,  
Sweetened with a slab of toffee.

I, his uncle, gave him warning,  
Showed the error of his ways,  
Hinted at to-morrow morning,  
Talked about my boyhood's days;  
All in vain I waved the bogey—  
He despised me as a fogey.

Well, perhaps the pains he suffers  
May be gifts of Fairy gold,  
Since he now says, "Only duffers  
Eat as much as they can hold."  
Thus, through physic and privations,  
TOMMY learns his limitations.

### CHARIVARIA.

ORDERS have been issued for the destruction of Army Stores in South Africa to the value of £9,000, on the ground that they have so far deteriorated as to be unfit for consumption. One cannot feel too grateful that in these days of economy it did not occur to the authorities to transfer these provisions to the Volunteers.

The crisis in Germany has induced one of the more enterprising of our illustrated journals to publish a portrait of the KAISER. He is a rather fierce-looking gentleman of a distinctly Teutonic type of countenance, and his moustache is arranged in the well-known KAISER style.

We cannot help thinking that in some quarters dislike of the Upper House is carried beyond the limits of common-sense. For instance, the other day *The Daily News*, in discussing the attitude of the Lords to the Education Bill, remarked, "They have altered more lines than were in the original Bill."





## UNANSWERABLE LOGIC.

*Well-meaning Humanitarian.* "WHY ARE YOU BEATING THE POOR DONKEY IN THAT WAY?"

*Coster (with withering scorn).* "AND A BLOOMIN' LOT O' GOOD IT 'UD DO BEATIN' THE CAR—EH?"

There is no doubt, a correspondent points out, that the Lords are now really frightened, and, in support of his contention, he mentions how few of them are now to be seen walking about in their coronets and robes. They are skulking in mufti.

Servia is obviously tiring of King PETER, and we understand that all future monarchs who may be engaged by that State will be given clearly to understand that they are liable to be dismissed on a month's notice, or on payment of a month's wages in lieu of notice.

Nature, it is well known, resents any interference with her laws. We have just had a striking example of this. A theatrical company at Warrington succeeded in producing *Sunday* on Monday. The following day the theatre was burnt down.

We hear that the promoters of the World's Fair are threatened with litigation. It is said that no less a personage than the German EMPEROR has taken

exception to one of the performers named CAICEO calling himself "The Monarch of the Wire."

News reaches us of a novelty in Amateur Theatricals. A distinguished party of ladies and gentlemen is about to produce *The Forty Thieves*, and, to give the rendering an air of realism, each of the forty performers constituting the title rôle is to be a real Company Promoter.

A shoemaker of Newport, Monmouth, has died at the age of 103. Had he lived another hundred years he would have reached the enormous age of 203.

Mr. Justice BARGRAVE DEANE has stated that no man ought to strike his wife, and it is rumoured that his Court is to be placarded with notices bearing the words, "I forbid the bangs!"

We are sorry to hear that subscriptions to Institutions for the Deaf showed a falling-off last year, but we think we

know the reason. It is beginning to be realised that, in these days of motor-omnibuses, deafness is no longer an unmitigated affliction.

An old gentleman, who was an involuntary participant in some snow-balling last week, noticed with regret a distinct improvement in the marksmanship of the youth of the nation.

A foolish old lady who has been reading about the Navy writes to ask us whether it is a fact that Liberty men wear art serges.

And an even more ignorant correspondent asks whether the Sud express from Paris to Lisbon has any connection with the Soap Trust.

#### The Seats of the Mighty.

"The Council then sat as a committee on the jubilee footpath from Kippford to Rockcliffe."—*Local Paper.*

A PLEASANT interlude in the day's business.



Farmer. "WHAT'S THAT THING STUCK UP ON THE SIDE?"

Ostler. "THAT'S A SPARE COVER, IN CASE ONE OF THE WHEELS GOES WRONG."

Farmer. "'UM—WELL I'VE A-DRUV 'ORSES FOR NIGH ON FIFTY YEAR, AN' I NEVER CARRIED A SPARE LEG FOR ONE OF 'EM YET!'"

### THE FULL MAN.

["The average Englishman . . . fills his mind with a lumber of cricket averages and personalities and football results, and by the time he has found what his favourite athlete eats, drinks, wears, and is nick-named, any greater effort of mind has become distasteful to him."—*Macmillan's Magazine*.]

In vain my coffee-cup appeals  
With swiftly cooling dregs;  
The bacon on my plate congeals  
Among the icy eggs;  
The toast grows tough; my soul disdains  
The devilled kidneys' cold remains,  
So greedily do I peruse  
The thrilling tale of football news.

I long to know precisely who  
Will take the field to-day,  
And what the Springboks mean to do  
About to-morrow's play;  
If SMITH is better, whether JONES  
Has really broken any bones,  
And how JIM JACKSON cracked his skull  
When playing centre-back for Hull.

And then, perchance, a par I sight  
With half-a-dozen yarns  
That throw an unexpected light  
ON BILLY BROWN OF FATES.

I learn when he is training hard  
His staple food is bread and lard,  
And how he rises with the lark  
To take a run in Richmond Park.

I know his measure round the chest,  
His height, his weight I know,  
And when he wears a woolly vest,  
And when a calico;  
The kind of boots that he prefers,  
And why he didn't join the 'Spurs,  
And how it was he failed to score  
At Tufnell Park in 1904.

I know the story of his rise,  
How many times he's played,  
How many goals, how many tries,  
How many fouls he's made.  
A score of pictures deck my wall—  
BILL BROWN the subject of them all—  
Some are plain photographs of BILL,  
And some, though coloured, plainer still.

When news so thrilling and sublime  
My morning paper brings,  
How can I squander precious time  
On unimportant things?  
Imperial politics may go  
With suffragettes to Jericho,  
The House of Lords may topple down—  
I only read of BILLY BROWN.

### The Journalistic Touch.

"AMONG the most admired features of the programme were the Spanish dance and the minuet—most gracefully performed on all hands."

*Manchester Guardian.*

FROM THE FIRST LEAGUE RESULTS IN *The Daily Mail* :—

WOOLWICH A (h)...3 EVERTON ... 12,000  
[Satterthwaite, Kyle, [Sharp.]  
Coleman.]

This appears (quite rightly, we think) under the heading "Prolific Scoring." Mr. SHARP is indeed to be congratulated.

"A West Bridgford gentleman tells an amusing story of an incident which he experienced in the course of a canvass he was making in a certain district. The door of a house was opened to him by the tenant, to whom he explained the object of his visit. 'Yes,' said the man cautiously, in an undertone, 'it's all right; but you see I'm a public official, and I have to be careful.' The real point of the humour lies in the fact of the office the voter held, which I am not at liberty to divulge."—*Nottingham Daily Express*.

ONE felt all the time that the writer was keeping something back. Somehow, as it stands, the point of the story seems to lack pungency.



### HANDS BENEATH THE SEA.

FATHER NEPTUNE. "LOOK HERE, MADAM. I'VE BEEN YOUR PROTECTOR ALL THESE YEARS, AND NOW I HEAR YOU THINK OF UNDERMINING MY POWER."

BRITANNIA. "WELL, THE FACT IS I WANT TO SEE MORE OF MY FRIENDS OVER THERE, AND I NEVER LOOK MY BEST WHEN I'VE BEEN SEA-SICK."





## RE-INSTATING CHRISTMAS.

*Broadlands, Yuletide.*

DEAREST DAPHNE,—Didn't I tell you that, in my new position, with unlimited cash at my back, I meant to bring off some big things? I've begun already, though only two months married. I've Re-instated Christmas, with my *Yuletide Revels at Broadlands*. Yes, my dear, thanks to your own BLANCHE, Christmas will no longer be voted poky and middle-class. I got together a lovely crowd, and we put in a simply ripping time. BOSH and WEE-WEE came, of course, and among the mob was that old dear, Colonel JERMYN, with his sister, who, though middle-aged and with the remains of considerable ugliness, is a right-down good sort, warranted to make things simmer anywhere. Aunt GOLDIE refused at first, but NORTY accepted, so, like a dutiful wife, she decided to follow her husband.

We'd holly and mistletoe everywhere, a great yule log burning in the hall, and all the traditional dishes at dinner, with snapdragon afterwards. Christmas Eve we all hung out our socks and stockings, and went round putting the most absurd things we could think of into them, though BOSH said nothing we could put in would be so absurd as what had been taken out of some of them.

I revived all the old Christmas customs I could think of. The Vicar here and some of the other local people helped me. The Waits came, and sang carols and things, and we had them in and gave them *wassail*.

NORTY criticised them and their singing unmercifully, said their *scales* were wrong, and they were *fraudulent Waits* liable to be indicted under the Act.

I gave them all a lovely surprise on Christmas night. The *Mummers* came round (they were the same village creatures as the Waits; the Vicar and I had drilled them, and I got their dresses from town). They came into the hall and went on just as the *Mummers* used to go on in the Middle Ages. NORTY said they didn't *mum* properly and that one of them was tipsy, which I think was distinctly horrid of him.

Then, when the *Mummers* were gone, we sat round the Yule Log and roasted chestnuts and told stories—fact or fiction—but they had to be original—(as NORTY, who was at his very wittiest, said, the chestnuts we were roasting were the only ones allowed). BOSH told rather a risky one, but Miss JERMYN beat him out of sight. JOSIAH frowned instead of laughing, but nobody notices what he does.

NORTY was quite wonderful in finding out old Christmas games for us to play. I'd no idea he was so learned or that people all that time ago had such a



FIRST IMPRESSIONS.

*Pres. R-r-r-t.* "My! if he ain't just a daisy! Most attractive personal'ty, I do declare! Hope I shan't get kind er hitched up in them eyebrow 'rangements!"

*Prof. Br-ce.* "H'm! nice pleasant expression. One who was not a purist in language might almost describe him as a 'peach.' Development of the teeth suggests tenacity and strength of character. Well, well! we must try to avoid them!"

good notion of amusing themselves. (BOSH remarked to me that there was nothing to be surprised at in NORTY knowing so much of such things, for, by his marriage, he had proved himself quite an *antiquarian*.)

He constituted himself Lord of Misrule, and set us all playing the most absurd old games. He said people used to play them in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. JOSIAH turned glumpy and said he didn't believe they were ever played, then or at any other time, and Aunt GOLDIE backed him up. Poor thing, she had tried desperately hard all day to be young and keep pace with us, but she couldn't stay the distance, she was short of gallops from the first, and at last crumpled up entirely and vanished to the upper regions.

Everyone's been so sweet, loading me with congrats on my success in getting Christmas out of the lumber-room. The "Sideglancer," the "Peeress" and "West-End Whispers" have all written to ask for interviews and photos, and they want me to send them articles on "Christmas as an Opportunity for Hostesses," "Christmas Redivivus," and so on. WEE-WEE says that that little Mrs. JIMMY SHARPE will be green and yellow with envy.

It seems a pity, just as I'm enjoying such a blaze of triumph, that JOSIAH and I should have had our first—no, not quarrel, I never quarrel, it's too

much trouble—but he began to complain of certain Christmas customs, the mistletoe and all that, you know.

"Why," I said, "you ought to be immensely proud that your wife has brought back Christmas. And you ought to reverence all those old Yuletide customs. Don't you know that we get the mistletoe and all its privileges direct from the Druids?"

And he actually said the Druids might be *somethinged*, and that, if they set all that nonsense going, they ought to have been ashamed of themselves. And he went on to say, "Such romping and flirting may be pardonable in boys and girls, but *men* ought to have more sense, and *married women* more reserve and dignity. And I tell you plainly, BLANCHE," he wound up, "that I expect those qualities in my wife."

"Reserve? Dignity?" I cried. "My dear man, where do you pick up these weird, old-world expressions? And, if you wanted those qualities in your wife, why on earth didn't you look for her in the Middle Classes?" He said no more, and neither can I just now, except that I'm Ever thine, BLANCHE.

P.S.—I'm afraid I see symptoms in JOSIAH of being rude to NORTY—such bad form, you know, in his own house! and so ungrateful too, for it was through NORTY he first got a footing in Society—and met Me!



URGING A WILLING BEAST.

Brilliant Railway Employé. "Naow then, 'urry up, Sir!"

## NEW YEAR RESOLUTIONS.

SHE was silent and thoughtful, and made no pretence at all of following my conversation. I knew that it was not brilliant, but it was, after all, my best; and all honest labour is worthy of some slight reward.

I had given her my views upon the theatres, and she had smiled sympathetically and said, as though agreeing with my remarks, that she had been so sorry when poor Mr. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN lost his seat in Manchester.

I left the Drama hurriedly, to touch with a light hand upon the Suffrage for Women, and she said that she had not yet been able to get it from that tiresome library. Then I turned to my reserves, drawing in masterly style upon that unfailing bank the Weather, and at that she did rouse herself from her abstraction.

"Oh! if you cannot do better than the Forecast," she said indignantly, "I shall really have to try myself!"

"If you only would!" I implored her. "It was your strange, unnatural silence that brought me down so low."

"I was thinking," she said. "I suppose men hardly ever think? I was just running over my Good Intentions for the New Year. If you like you may tell me yours."

I stared at her dumbly for a moment. I had no good intentions that I knew of, except one, indeed, for which I had been nerving my courage for the last six weeks. I caught at flippancy as a drowning sailor catches at another.

"There's that bill of my tailor's," I said earnestly. "The fellow has certainly expressed his wishes crudely, but I really think——"

"Please try to be sensible," she said quite severely. "I wasn't joking at all. However, since——"

"Then I will be serious, too," I said with sudden courage. "I want to tell you my one great Good Intention. I want—I want——"

"I think, if you don't mind, I should like to tell you mine," she said, as I gasped and groped for words. "I am going to conquer all my faults, of course——"

"It seems a work of supererogation," I murmured very humbly.

"I don't quite know what that means," she answered coldly. "But I suppose it's something sarcastic and unkind. However, no one can do more than their very best. But besides my faults I can't quite make up my mind what to do about Superstitions."

"What is it that you can't decide about?" I asked.

"Why, I can't decide whether to give them up, or to pay more attention to them. There is the question of Touching Wood, for instance."

"I think it is quite a harmless practice," I said indulgently.

"Ah! you sneer at it, of course," she said. "But let me tell you what happened from not doing it. You know Aunt JANE, I think, and you know her poodle Bijou?"

I nodded brightly. Aunt JANE wears

black satin with beads upon it, and Bijou has deceptive black paws with perpetual wet black mud upon them.

"Yes," I said. "I know them both. One of these days she'll persuade someone to shake hands with her once too often."

She stared at me for a moment indignantly, then she smiled with a certain restraining gravity.

"You mean Bijou, of course?" she said. "For a moment I thought you were speaking of dear Aunt JANE! But Bijou will never shake hands with anyone any more. She's dead."

I expressed regret by a slight but effective pantomime.

"Yes, she's dead," she continued, "and perhaps she might have been saved. Aunt JANE told me about it herself, and we both cried. One morning a week ago Bijou was frisking around her, so strong and happy, and Aunt JANE said out loud, 'How well and young my darling's looking! She was never better in all her life.' And she forgot to touch wood!"

I looked a question.

"Run over by a horrid, horrid motor-car within the week," she answered sadly. "And, as Aunt JANE says, she might have been saved. So, you see, it certainly proves that wood ought to be touched whenever possible. Because it *might* do good, and it is so easy to do. But then—there was the case of the salt at dinner the other day. I spilt some, and then threw it over my left shoulder. I acted for the best, and yet a good deal of trouble came of it. How was I to know that PARKINS was standing behind me?"

"Well?" I said sympathetically.

"Yes, she went! You know what servants are. She told mother that it might not have been intentional, but she really didn't care to risk it again. And she was such a perfect maid!"

"So what are you to do?" she went on, and her forehead was wrinkled in the most charming fashion. "Neglecting one precaution kills poor Bijou, and taking another almost blinds poor PARKINS. What is one to do for the best?"

I think it was those delightful wrinkles that gave me courage.

"I don't know a little bit," I said; "but I will give the matter earnest thought, and I will cling to or discard every superstition in the world as you shall choose, if you will only listen to my own great Good Intention——"

"Well—if I must," she said patiently.

At the end of a satisfactory interview she announced it as her conviction that we should be happy ever afterwards. Then she remembered that she had been boasting and ought to touch wood. So she tapped me on the head.



A YEAR'S REGRETS.



1  
If only I had not been lighting up.



2  
If only I had seen the trap.



3  
If only the cork had not come out of the bottle.



4  
If only I had played forward instead of back.



5  
If only I had kicked, and not headed, the ball.



6  
If only I had kept my eyes on the ball instead of the girl.



7  
If only I had hung on to the punt instead of the pole.



8  
If only I had kissed before the canon.

*Chaukway*

## THE CAROL ACADEMY.

The *Daily Express* of December 20 states that it has discovered a school for the training of young carol-cadgers, presided over by an expert ex-beggar and especially flourishing about Christmas time. We are fortunate in obtaining a rough-drafted prospectus of the same:—

Professor FAGIN, Jun. (of distinguished educational ancestry) begs to inform the Unemployed and Light-fingered Gentry of the Metropolis and Suburbs that he has returned to town from a lengthy walking tour in the Provinces, and is now prepared to resume his winter course of Lectures.

The subjects of instruction include:

Variations on three well-known Hymn-tunes, or, How to sing in several keys at once.

The delivery of the corresponding verses with a due disregard of their sense.

The Art of Repetition, or Boring for Coppers.

Carolling into Key-holes, with Hints on being Kick-proof.

Some Useful Repartees, on being sent empty away.

The Musical Treatment of Arias, including Area-sneaking.

Lugubriousness as an Aid to Money-making.

The Borrowed Baby, and where to Pinch it within earshot of the Philanthropic.

How to avoid being Pinched (by the Police).

The Whole Theory of being a Public Nuisance.

Professor FAGIN receives pupils of any age from three years upwards, exhibitions being granted to Infants in arms. The third and fourth cadgers of a family pay half-fees, which in ordinary cases are the price of a pot of beer per hymn-tune, and 50 per cent. extra with words. All fees are strictly payable in advance.

Applications for admission to the Academy may be made at any time to the Principal by Parents or Guardians, there being no irksome restrictions as to Health Certificates or Character. The sole qualification is the possession of a pair of lungs. The duration of the

holidays is somewhat irregular, and depends on the length of the terms served elsewhere by the Professor.

The Carol-Cadgers' Academy is distinctly undenominational and non-provided. No difficulties occur with respect to the existing Education Act, as the Principal discourages visits from Inspectors. Pupils are cautioned against communicating his address to the Police.

## THE STATESMAN AS INVENTOR.

THE "Balfour seat-stick," devised by the late PRIME MINISTER and Mr. J. L. WANKLYN, and fully described in *The Times* of December 22, is not the only instance of mechanical inventiveness displayed by highly-placed politicians.

Wide popularity is also anticipated for the "Burns' Porter's Knot," a portable contrivance which enables a person of ordinary physique to hoist any article, from a coal-scuttle to a grand piano, on to his back and carry it without fatigue for several miles.

The "Lloyd-George Peer-Persuader," which the PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE has designed with the assistance of Dr. CLIFFORD, is a remarkably neat and tasteful combination of a conductor's bâton and a life-preserver, the leaden knob being removable when the instrument is required for beating time during the performance of anthems, hymns, &c.

The "Winston Auto-Cornet" is a charming little toy, which threatens to run the gramophone hard in popularity, as it enables anyone, no matter how undistinguished or incapable, to blow his own trumpet without the slightest effort. None are genuine without the signature of the UNDER SECRETARY FOR THE COLONIES stamped on the mouthpiece.

"THE REV. G. RENDELO (Charterhouse) expressed opposite views. He had been familiar with both forms of pronunciation, and he thought that the agitation for reform in the school teaching of Latin proceeded from academic considerations. Dr. GLW also declared himself to be adverse to the motion."—*The Daily Telegraph*.

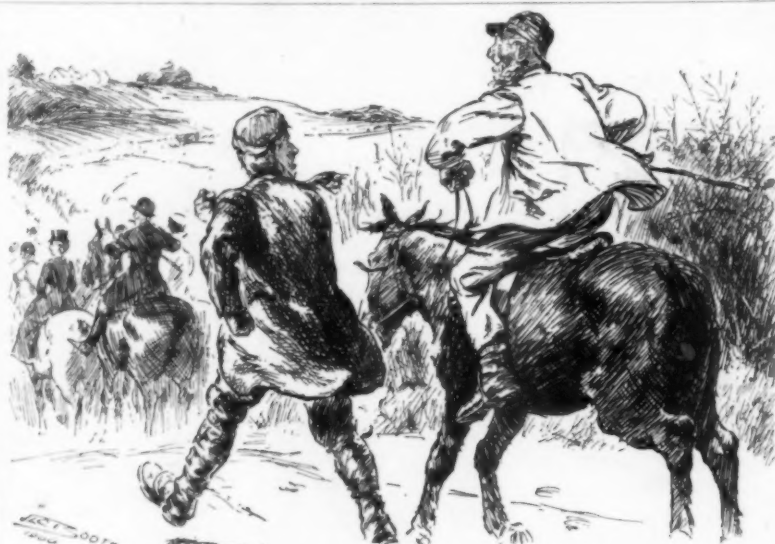
If Signor RENDELO would kindly pronounce Dr. GLW's name in any language the other question would settle itself.

## TO THE PRINCIPAL OF THE MAK-FIT SCHOOL OF PHYSICAL CULTURE.

SIR,—Please stop my BILL from having Physical Torture. Our house is badly built and BILL fixes his developer in a fresh place every week.

SIR,—After three months at your School of Physical Culture, the Magistrate gave me three months—one for each policeman.

FROM A LIFE ASSURANCE PUFF:—"Thus when we consider the ENORMOUS advantages resulting from Life Assurance to those who die soon . . . it becomes abundantly plain," &c.



## "WHO'S WHO" IN THE WEST.

Young Jarge. "OI DU 'EAR TELL AS THEY 'VE MADE THE COLONEL A 'M.V.O.' NOW WHET DU THEY MEAN?"

Old Joe. "WOY, WHEER WAS 'EE BROUGHT UP? 'MAISTER O' VOX-'OUNDS,' TO BE SURE!"

In the course of a recent tour of the West-End shops, Mr. *Punch's* representative ascertained that quite a number of useful implements have been patented by eminent statesmen and placed on the market.

The "Rosebery Spade-Slate," which ingeniously combines these two useful articles, will no doubt prove an incalculable boon to those who unite a taste for agricultural labour with a partiality for drawing or mathematics.

The "Keir-Hardie Campbell-Goad," which has been constructed from designs supplied by the leader of the Labour Party, is a weapon of the thrusting order, armed with an extraordinarily sharp point, and when suddenly dug into the flank or the hump of a recalcitrant leader produces the desired result with quite astonishing rapidity.

## A CHRISTMAS COLD.

THE moment I heard HARRY's key in the door I was conscious of a presentiment of evil; then he sneezed, and a sinister shadow like a pall settled over our home. He had come home with a cold, and it was Christmas Eve. Under ordinary conditions HARRY is light-hearted and lovable, but only his nearest and dearest, that's me, can testify how a common cold changes his character, and really, if he had caught one during our fiancéehood, I doubt if I should have married him.

Omitting his usual greeting as he entered the room, he strode to the fire, and sweeping aside the Christmas cards I had arranged on the mantelpiece to gladden his eye, demanded with a fierce glare "If we were short of coals, or what?" I did not mention by name the disaster that had befallen us, but heaped coals on the fire and tenderly suggested ammoniated quinine. He shook his head. "It must take its course," he replied darkly. My heart sank; I knew that course so well.

"Then I'd better wire to say we can't go to-morrow," I said. We were going to a Christmas family party.

"You can go," he replied. "Of course I shan't."

"Then of course I shan't," I said; "but the servants are all going out."

"Let them go," he replied. "We shan't want them. You'd better keep ELIZA in."

"There's nothing much to eat in the house," I said dubiously.

"We shan't want anything," he said. "You don't suppose I can eat with this cold?"

"Well—er—perhaps ELIZA can," I suggested meekly.

"She'd better get a turkey and a brace of pheasants for herself, then," he remarked with bitter irony, and feeling rather put out myself I gave ELIZA some money and told her to get something extra, just what she liked. Taking me at my word, she purchased three boxes of crackers and a cake.

For the rest of the evening HARRY sat silently brooding over the fire, and sniffing at regular intervals of twenty seconds; twice he sneezed in a strangled manner that brought relief to neither of us, and three times he swore at the servants because they opened the door

when they came into the room. At dinner he burst into conversation—

"What's this?" he asked wearily, glowering at his plate.

"Cod," I replied.

"It tastes like sodden wood," he said; "take it away." But that was when he had eaten the greater part of it, and in spite of laying down his knife and fork

I'll look at them later," when I presented my Christmas gifts. His cold had apparently reached the second stage, for he spent the morning savagely blowing his nose, and heaving such heart-tearing sighs that I was obliged to go down to the kitchen and pull a few crackers with ELIZA to keep my spirits up.

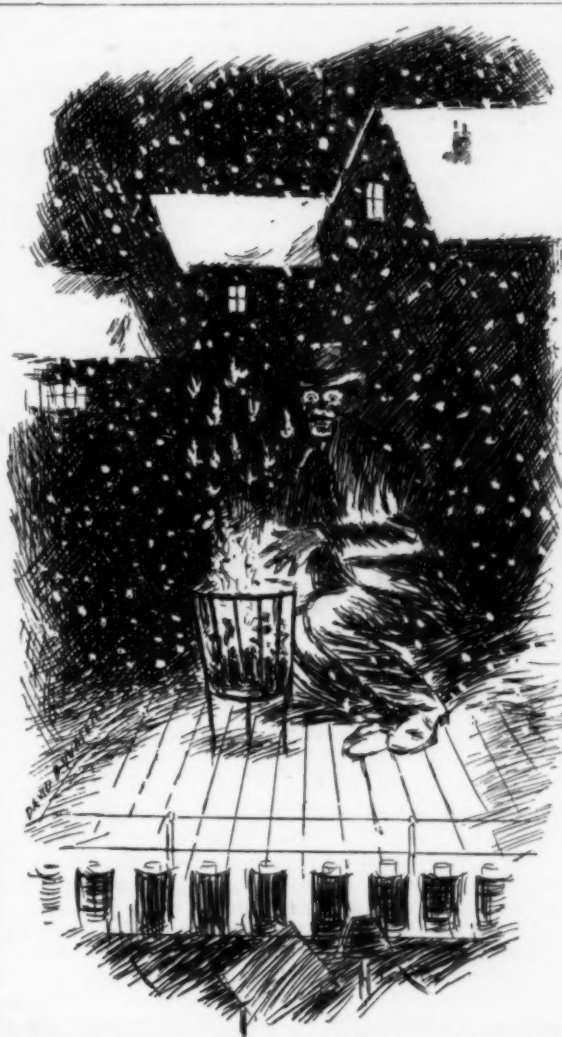
After lunch, when I shared the menu of beef-tea and gruel, to save trouble, the third phase made its appearance; he no longer sat by the fire, but strode up and down the room, sounding his chest with his fist, and making raucous noises in his throat. But after tea he subsided again in his chair, and sat with his eyes closed and the tips of his right-hand fingers on the pulse of his left wrist, while I read "God's Good Man," and tried to forget it was Christmas night. Suddenly he sprang to his feet, and seizing the Stores price list began studying its contents. This was a new and welcome phase—I hoped it meant a renewed interest in life, and also that he had suddenly remembered he had not bought me a Christmas present. Rising quietly, I peeped over his shoulder; he closed the book hastily, but not before I had seen, with a horrid pang, that it was open at the illustrated price list of monumental headstones, and I hurried downstairs again to pull a few more crackers, but found ELIZA had a friend in the kitchen, so wandered back again.

At dinner he refused all the invalid dishes, though ELIZA had thoughtfully trimmed them with holly, but helped himself bountifully to macaroni cheese. An hour later, in a gentle submissive voice that brought the tears to my eyes, he asked for a kettle of boiling water, a large soda-water glass and a lemon. With these he mixed himself a huge quantum of hot rum; and in the bilious attack

that followed I am thankful to say the cold was forgotten.

"I may perhaps venture to point out that JAMES THE SEVENTH of Scotland and SECOND of England was not the great grandson of Queen MARY, but her great grand nephew, brother of her great grandson CHARLES THE SECOND."—"A Scottish Baronet" in *Modern Society*.

Answer to "Scottish Baronet."—Your uprights were correct, but one of the lights was missing. Try again next week.



DURING THE GREAT SNOW-STORM SCENE.

The Wanderer (*sotto voce*). "IF THESE SNOWFLAKES KEEP ON CATCHING ALIGHT, WE SHALL HAVE THE BALLY SNOW ON FIRE!"

occasionally to take a deep breath he really made quite a good meal. Afterwards he retired for a hot bath and to sleep between blankets, and I sent out half-a-crown to the Waits to ask them to go away, as there was sickness in the house.

On Christmas morning he came down to breakfast in his overcoat, remarking grimly "About the same," in answer to tentative enquiries, and "Much obliged,



## OUR BOOKING-OFFICE.

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks.)

*The Modern Way*, by MRS. W. K. CLIFFORD (CHAPMAN AND HALL), is a collection of comfortable little tales in sketchy outline which reflect a sufficient knowledge and observation of life without overmuch analysis. They are told at break-neck speed, and it is all over every time before you can get your second wind. They remind me, too, of a box of assorted sweets where each destroys the taste of the one before, and it doesn't matter because the next is just as good and is going to do just the same. If distinction is possible, the Comedies are best, and "Freddie's Engagement" perhaps the best of these; but the Tragedies are also good, when they are not too obvious, and when they give Mrs. CLIFFORD a chance for her pleasant gift of cynical humour, as in "Edward Brunson's Return." One feature of the book is its needlessly precise topography; another is its extension of the age of romance into the thirties and forties; a third is the rapidity with which forlorn lovers console themselves. Whenever they do so, it is always done within twenty-four hours. I am glad to think that this is "The Modern Way," though I doubt if the title is otherwise always applicable. Certainly the book tells you nothing about bridge or motors, and still less about balloons and aeroplanes; it looks as if, after all, the "way of a man with a maid" can still dispense with these properties.

Mr. BRADBY acknowledges his indebtedness to SAINT-SIMON, prince among diarists, for the materials from which he paints his picture of *The Great Days of Versailles* (SMITH, ELDER). He does not confine himself to that source, drawing upon other, happily abundant, memoirs of the time. The result is a full, picturesque, personal record of life and doings which, if they did not belong to undisputed history, might be suspected as the work of SWIFT in his most malevolent mood. For seventy-two years LOUIS the FOURTEENTH not only reigned in France but ruled. It is almost impossible for men in these days to realise the completeness of his autocracy. We find some travesty of it in the vagaries of the German EMPEROR. But he is restrained to a certain extent by public opinion and the criticisms of the Press. The commonplace, curiously ignorant person, abjectly hailed as LE GRAND MONARQUE, was free from such bonds. He was absolute master, not only of the destinies of France, but of the hourly actions of the Court that surrounded him. From the time he rose in the morning till he went to bed, attended at every step by ordered ceremonial, he was the object of an adulation sickening to read about. Mr. BRADBY makes the best of him, pleading in extenuation of his failings the lack of education in his youth, deliberately ordered by MAZARIN, who shrewdly thought it would not suit his purpose if his young charge, coming to the throne, knew too much. At best he was a poor, stuffed, strutting thing, selfish, cruel, openly outraging morality, till with advancing years he was frightened into the arms of the priests. Through his long reign the faggots of the furnace of Revolution were stored and laid. It seems a lack of poetical justice that he was not lapped up in the flame and fury of the long-

suffering people's wrath when it burst forth. It is a mean story, but it is a page of history, and Mr. BRADBY illuminates it with many graphic touches conveyed from the writing of men and women who took part in the squalid drama.

Mr. JACK LONDON's book, *Moon-Face* (HEINEMANN), a collection of quite remarkably good short stories, which takes its title from the first of them, is, in a manner of speaking, a library in itself, and an intelligent knack of prophecy enables me to overhear the public librarians of the near future delivering some such scraps of conversation as the following: "KIPLING, madam? Something typical? Here's the very thing. *Moon-Face*, page 27—'Local Colour,' a short story full of recondite, yet interesting, technicalities." Or, "H. G. WELLS, Sir? The scientific line—plausible impossibilities? Certainly. *Moon-Face*, page 117—'The Shadow and the Flash,' a yarn about two invisible men who kill each other." And so on, and so on. There are several other styles represented. For instance, the story "Moon-Face" might at a pinch pass for EDGAR ALLEN POE. And one at least—"All Gold Canyon"—is not at all unlike JACK LONDON. But I leave the development of the scheme to the ingenuity of the librarians (who are at liberty, if they like, to make use of my monologues). The fact is that the author, influenced, doubtless, by the trend of popular taste, has unconsciously happened upon a number of distinct veins, and he has worked each of them as well as if they were his own familiar Northern Wild. I venture to commend him to magazine editors who are anxious to reduce their lists of contributors.



"THESE WHO, REPLYING NOT, SUBMIT  
UNTO THE CURSES OF THE PIT."  
Kipling, "Nicholson's Almanack of Sports."

War Ministers of our times to deal with the problem of Army Reform which, like the poor, is as much with us as ever. That Mr. ARNOLD-FOSTER's proposals were misunderstood is clear from this book, which must be regarded as a plain and straightforward explanation, rather than a defence, of his 1904 scheme. It will be welcomed by all who have had only the inaccurate deductions of Parliament and the Press on which to base their opinions. The House of Commons, as a whole, has been too apt to place economy above efficiency; to accept the formula  $2-1+2=5$  without demur (see p. 191), and to welcome any soap-trust substitution of fifteen ounces for one pound so long as there is an effective catch phrase on the wrapper.

Advocates of compulsory service will find the arguments against their theory set out here in a reasoned and forcible style. They are based upon a consideration of the country's needs rather than of the cry that "the nation will have none of it"; and they insist that value for money should be the test of any scheme proposed. It was a happy idea of Mr. ARNOLD-FOSTER's to state his case to the public before the promised Army Scheme of the present Secretary of War had been revealed to us, and we may expect, and Mr. HALDANE will doubtless welcome, a broader and more searching criticism of that scheme than would have been possible before the publication of this book.